

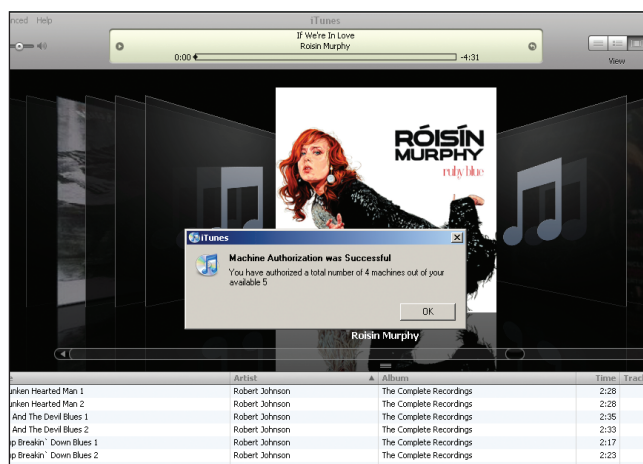
SOFTWARE HELP

Getting to grips with de-authorisation

Q I'm planning to reinstall Windows on my PC, but I'm confused by the Deauthorize Computer option in iTunes.

The help files don't provide much information, other than saying that I should de-authorise if I sell or give away my computer. If I de-authorise my computer, will I be able to authorise it again after reinstalling Windows?

Gary Shaw



▲ De-authorise iTunes before reinstalling Windows to conserve your licence to play protected music

A Songs bought from the iTunes Store can be played on up to five computers, and these five licences can be moved freely between computers. This allows you to de-authorise and re-authorise a computer. It's worth de-authorising before you reinstall Windows so as not to waste one of your five authorisations. To do this click Store, Deauthorize Computer, enter your Apple ID and password and click OK. If you've bought anything in Audible format, you'll need to de-authorise this separately using the Advanced menu. If you forget to de-authorise a computer, though, all is not lost. Once you have authorised five PCs, an option will appear in Store, View My Account to de-authorise all five. You can then re-authorise those you're still using. This can only be done once a year, though.

Digital Rights Management (DRM) causes a lot of headaches for law-abiding users, which is why many prominent figures have called for it to be removed from music downloads. Until this happens, we recommend that you burn an audio CD of any music you download. Should you have a problem with the digital files, you'll be able to re-import the music from CD as DRM-free MP3s. **BP**

Counting months in Excel

Q I use Excel to store information about the people who sign up to a newsletter. I'd like to see how the number of people signing up varies during the year. To do this, I'd like to show how many people joined in January, how many in February and so on. Is there a formula I can use?

Bill Peters

A Before we get to the formula, there are a few things to bear in mind. First, if you're storing information about people that could identify them, you need to be aware of the Data Protection Act. Second, if you want to use the information you're compiling, it might be better to store it in a database.

If you're happy to continue using Excel, though, the function you need is called SumProduct. It works on arrays, so it looks strange. If your set of dates are in column A, from A1 to A100, then to show the number of people who signed up in January you'd use a formula that looks like this:

=SUMPRODUCT(--(MONTH(A1:A100)=1))

For February, it would be:

=SUMPRODUCT(--(MONTH(A1:A100)=2))

To help explain this formula, we'll break it apart and consider it piece by piece. If you had a formula that said:

=MONTH(A1)=2

It would return either True or False, depending on the value in A1. If you surround the formula with parentheses and add two minus signs to the start:

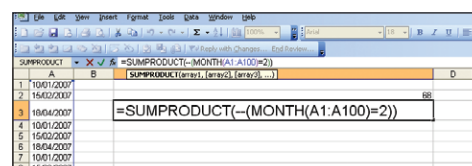
=--(MONTH(A1)=2)

You'd see either 0 or 1 instead of True or False. The -- tells Excel to convert the True or False values to either 1 (for True) or 0 (for False).

What you want to know, though, is how many times this is True in the whole of the column from A1 to A100. By putting the formula we've just created in SumProduct and referring to the whole set of data from A1 to A100, you get the finished formula:

=SUMPRODUCT(--(MONTH(A1:A100)=2))

For this to work, there must be no blank cells in the range being examined. If there are any blank cells, these are counted as a January date. This happens because the Month formula returns a value between 1 and 12, even if the cell is blank. So Month(A15), when A15 is empty, returns 1. **KE**



▲ SumProduct can be used to calculate a total when given an array of values

YOUR EXPERTS

Contact Software Help for software advice and answers

Kay Ewbank

Database developer and productivity expert Kay Ewbank offers help with office applications.



Ben Pitt

Professional musician and keen photographer Ben Pitt gives advice on using creative software.



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Making a contents table

Q I am writing a book using Word 2002 on Windows XP. To keep track of what I've written, I have given each paragraph a heading. That way, I can easily make a contents table that tells me what each paragraph is about.

I now want to take this a step further. Rather than having a heading, I want to use the first sentence of each paragraph as a sort of heading. That way, I can still create a detailed contents table to help me plan, but the reader will not notice anything discontinuous about the actual text. It also has the advantage of making the first sentence of each paragraph say something significant, like a summary of the paragraph.

The trouble with Word seems to be that each style wants a proper paragraph starting on a new line, so the first sentence and the rest of the paragraph cannot run together seamlessly. Is there a way round this? If not, can WordPerfect do what I want? I have been wondering whether it would be better to swap to a different word processor, but for all its irritations, Microsoft Word seems good for long, complicated documents.

David Barnes

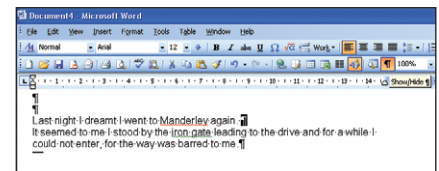
A There are a several ways to do this. First, you could use a field code. This has the drawback that if you then want to change the first sentence, you have to

change it in two places. To insert a TC field, denoting an entry in the table of contents, you need to type the first sentence of your paragraph, then select it. Next, insert the field using the keyboard short cut Alt-Shift-O. You'll see the text you've selected already present as the table of contents entry. You can choose the entry level the text should appear at in the table of contents; by default, it is set to level 1, the top level, which may not be what you want. You'll have a field in your text that looks like this:

```
{ TC "Last night I dreamt I went to Manderley again" \f C \l "3" }
```

The \f C switch tells Word you want this entry in your main table of contents.

The next option avoids the problem of having to change the field as well as the paragraph if you want to edit your text, but it involves more fiddling when you're typing the text in the first place. It relies on the use of a hidden paragraph mark. You type your lead-in paragraph as a separate paragraph. Format it as a heading style such as Heading 3. You'll need to set the formatting of Heading 3 to be the same as your main text, usually Body Text. Then type your next sentence. Make sure you can view the paragraph markers; the easiest way is to press the Show/Hide button, which looks like Word's paragraph marker, on the Standard toolbar. Select the paragraph mark at the end of your opening



▲ You can use hidden paragraph markers to make two paragraphs appear as one

sentence and set its format to be Hidden. You can do this by pressing Ctrl-Shift-H. Press the Show/Hide button again, and your two paragraphs look as though they're only one. If you choose this option, remember to hide Hidden text before generating the table of contents, or your page numbering will be wrong.

Word 2002 and later versions offer a third choice, which is probably the simplest. You can use what's known as a Style separator. Type your entire paragraph (or at least the first couple of sentences), all in Body Text or whatever style you're using for the main text. Next select the first sentence and apply the heading style you want to use for your table of contents. This style should be set to look exactly the same as your body text. Word won't force the sentence you've selected on to a new line, so it will look like one paragraph, but the first sentence will go into your table of contents.

You can choose any paragraph style to be included within your table of contents, so you needn't modify Heading 1, 2 or 3 for use in your first paragraph sentences. You can define your own style, then modify the table of contents to use it: click Options in the Table of Contents tab on the Index and Tables dialog. **KE**

Combining different sample rates

Q I'm trying to import an audio file recorded on another PC into a music project I'm working on in Cubase. Unfortunately, the sample rates don't match: the recording is at 48kHz but my track is at 44.1kHz. As a result, Cubase is playing the recording too slowly.

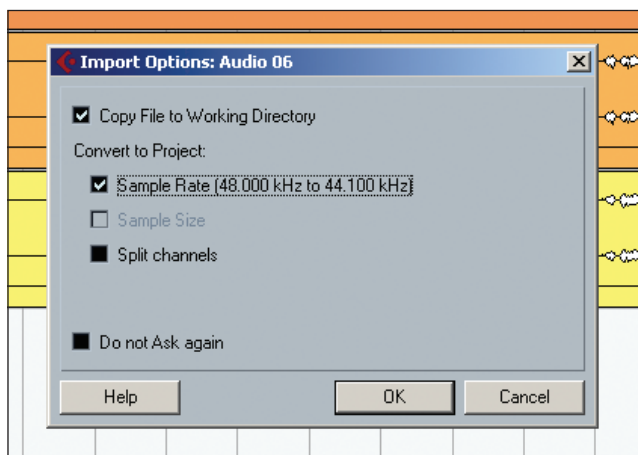
Changing the sample rate doesn't help, as this just makes everything else too fast. Do you know of any way that would allow me to combine different sample rates in the same project?

Philip Hunt

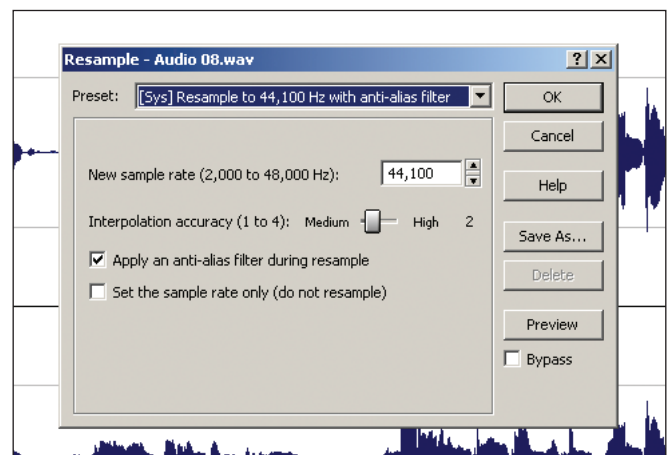
A Cubase can't handle different sample rates in the same project, but it has an option to convert non-matching audio files on import. By default, the Import Options dialog box that includes this option appears every time you import an audio file. However, this can get quite tedious, so it's likely that you've selected the Do Not Ask Again tick box. To re-enable the box again, click File, Preferences and the Editing, Audio tab. On the section marked On Import Audio Files, select Open Options Dialog. Alternatively, you can fix a file that has already been imported by selecting it,

right-clicking and selecting Process, Resample and setting 44,100 as the New Rate.

Some music software can't handle sample-rate conversion. If this is the case, you have to convert files in a stereo editor such as Sony Sound Forge Audio Studio. You can download a 30-day trial from www.sonymediasoftware.com. Open the file to be converted, click Process, Resample and select the preset that matches your desired sample rate. Make sure the 'Apply an anti-alias filter during resample' option is ticked, as this avoids quantisation errors that manifest themselves as high-frequency distortion. **BP**



▲ Cubase can convert sample rates on import, but you may need to re-activate this dialog box

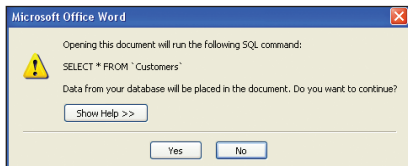


▲ Sound Forge Audio Studio handles sample-rate conversion and a range of other editing tasks

Dialog query

Q When I open a Word XP or 2003 mailmerge main document, I see a dialog box showing the SQL that will be used to retrieve the names and addresses. Several colleagues would also like to see the dialog box when they open the document, but they can't. Any ideas why?

Sarah Shaw



▲ The SQL dialog shows what code you're about to run during a mailmerge in Word

A The dialog box describing the SQL command that is about to be executed was added as part of the security features of Office XP. You must have installed Office XP Service Pack 3 on your computer, but perhaps your colleagues didn't. However, the dialog should appear in all later versions of Microsoft Office after Office XP. Generally, this dialog irritates people, so there's information on how to stop it from appearing in the Knowledge Base article at <http://support.microsoft.com/?kbid=825765>.

It's possible someone has taken steps to prevent it appearing on the computers used by your colleagues. To make it appear again, you'll need to examine the Registry on each of their computers to see if a particular key is present. If it is there, removing it should fix the problem.

Remember, serious problems can occur if you edit the system Registry, so be careful not to change anything apart from the bit on which

you're working. Click Start, then Run and type regedit to launch the Registry Editor. The value you'll need to check for will depend on the version of Word that you're using. If your colleagues are using Word 2003, you need to look for a key called:

HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Microsoft\Office\11.0\Word\Options

If they are using Word 2002 Service Pack 3 (also known as Word XP), look for:

HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Microsoft\Office\10.0\Word\Options

Whichever version you're using, within the Options section you should see an item called SQLSecurityCheck. If you do, right-click on it and choose Delete. This will re-enable the SQLSecurity Check dialog box on that PC. **KE**

What can I do with empty fields?

Q I was interested in your recent article about inserting carriage returns in strings (*Software Help*, *Shopper* May 2007). I want to output an address from my database, so I've added carriage returns after every line. But now, if one field is empty, this results in a completely blank line in the address.

I heard that putting parentheses around each part of the code would work, but this must be for Visual Basic because it doesn't work in SQL. I'm beginning with a standard Access query, then switching to SQL view to fine-tune what it does. Can you help me?

David Charlton

A You have something along the lines of a query on Northwind's Customer table, with a column in your query that's an expression such as:

```
[Address] & Chr(13) & Chr(10)
& [City] & Chr(13) & Chr(10) &
[Postalcode]
```

Swapping to SQL View shows you a SQL expressions such as:

```
SELECT Customers.CompanyName,
[address] & Chr(13) & Chr(10)
& [city] & Chr(13) & Chr(10) &
[postalcode] AS Expr1
FROM Customers;
```

Expr1 is the column name in the query where you created your expression. The Chr(13) & Chr(10) in between the column names are there to put a carriage return and line feed character into the block of text that's created. Without these, you'd get:

```
10 High Street Sometown XX1 1XX
```

With them, you get:

```
10 High Street
Sometown
XX1 1XX
```

The problem arises if one of the columns is empty. In most cases, the solution is fairly simple. In Access, there are two ways you can join two character strings together: using &, as you have done, or using the + operator. The difference is that the + operator propagates nulls. In other words, if you add two character strings together and one of them is empty, you get back the whole result as empty. This doesn't really sound as though it's what we need, but parentheses can be used to make it work. You need to surround each 'line' element within the SQL code with parentheses, then change the & operators within the blocks to + operators. Leave the & operators that go between the blocks as they are. The altered expression will look like this:

```
SELECT Customers.CompanyName,
([address] + Chr(13) + Chr(10))
& ([city] + Chr(13) + Chr(10)) &
[postalcode] AS Expr1
FROM Customers;
```

So if city contains no data, then the part of the expression that has the city data and its associated Chr(13) and Chr(10) to force the line feed between the lines of the address all return a null. We'll still get the rest of the address as that null is handled by the & operator for the rest of the expression.

So, for our High Street example with the city column holding no data, you'd get:

```
10 High Street
XX1 1XX
```

This technique of using parentheses and different operators (& and +) in different places won't work if you have the Allow Zero Length property set to Yes for any of the fields you're working with. Allow Zero Length tells Access that if the field is empty, instead of returning a Null, it returns an empty string. Access treats Nulls and empty strings quite differently, so a blank field that has its Allow Zero Length string set (in the table definition, for example) will still force a blank line in your customer name and address block. Using Allow Zero Length isn't usually

recommended, but if you want to use it, you need to use a slightly more complex expression in your SQL Select string:

```
SELECT Customers.CompanyName,
IIf([address] Is Null Or [address]
='') & Chr(13) & Chr(10)
)) & IIf([city] Is Null Or [city]
='') & Chr(13) & Chr(10) &
[postalcode] AS Expr1
FROM Customers;
```

This looks worse than it is. All you're actually doing is changing each part of the way the concatenated address block is constructed to say: If the column is Null or the empty string, return the empty string, otherwise return the value with carriage return and line feed.

To do this, we use the immediate If operator, IIf. This has three parts: the thing you're testing, the value to return if the test returns true, and the value to return if the test returns false. If we look at the city part of the expression, it reads:

```
IIf([city] Is Null Or [city]='', '', ([city]
& Chr(13) & Chr(10)))
```

It's worth pointing out that, depending on how you are planning to use your concatenated address, there are other ways to achieve similar results. For instance, if you're going to use it in a report or form, you could still avoid seeing blank lines in the report by just having the separate columns as separate controls, and setting their CanGrow and CanShrink properties.

Having the CanGrow property set to Yes tells Access that if there's too much data to show within a control, it can be expanded to show all the data when the form or report is either printed or previewed. Similarly, setting the CanShrink property to Yes tells Access that a control can be shrunk to nothing if it would otherwise show an empty space when the form or report is printed or previewed.

It is possible to set the CanGrow and CanShrink properties for text box controls, form and report sections, subform controls, and subreport controls. **KE**

Storing Outlook Express data on a network

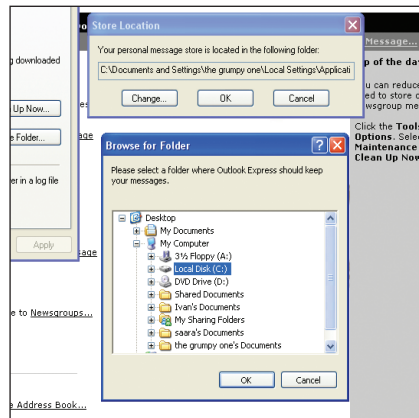
Q Can I use a folder on a server computer to store my Outlook Express emails and address book? This would allow me to access my email from any computer on the network, with no need to keep synchronising the email data between them. If not, is there a different email program that can do this?

Dr Henry Chandler

A You can force Outlook Express to use data stored on a network, but it can cause problems. Microsoft does not support the practice of storing Outlook Express data on a mapped network drive or a removable disk, but you can force it to use a non-local drive by editing the Registry. In this case, a number of Registry keys need changing. As always, be very careful if you decide to edit the Registry as changing the wrong value could cause your computer to stop working. To edit it, click Start, then Run, then type regedit in the dialog box. You can find the full list of Registry keys that need to be changed at a website called Inside Outlook Express. The page you need is <http://insideoe.tomsterdam.com/files/regkeys.htm>.

To show you the type of changes you'd need to make, one of the values you're looking for is found in:

HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Identities\



▲ Outlook Express isn't designed to work with networked storage, and expects to store data locally

Within this, there will be one or more values surrounded by curly brackets { }. Going down the chain, you'll then find:

Software\Microsoft\Outlook Express\5.0\Store Root

The 5.0 may be different depending on which version of Outlook Express you're using. You can change the value shown in this item to point to a networked drive or a removable drive. The Store Root value will be something like:

```
%UserProfile%\Local Settings\Application Data\
Identities\{long value}\Microsoft\Outlook
Express\
```

You can change this to refer to a storage location on your network. If you want to tell one computer to use the Outlook Express data being stored on another computer, for example, the format to use is:

```
\\{server computer name}\{server C drive name}\
WINDOWS\Profiles\{UserName}
\Application Data\Identities\{same long number
as before}\Microsoft\Outlook
Express
```

There is, however, one significant problem associated with this method. If more than one person tries to access the Outlook Express data files at the same time, these files can become corrupted. This can result in you losing your emails and your address book. Slightly less dangerous, but still irritating, is another problem: if the network location isn't available when you start Outlook Express, the software creates a new data file on the local hard disk and overwrites this Registry change.

On the whole, if you want to store email files on a network it's safer and easier to buy a full copy of Microsoft Outlook. Outlook 2002 and later versions can store data on a network without any problems. **KE**

How can I edit my movies?

Q I have copied some old home movies from VHS tape to DVD+R media using an all-in-one video and DVD recorder. Presently I have seven to eight short movies on each disc, but I want to edit and burn these again as individual films to give to friends and relatives.

I have tried to edit them on my PC using Movie Maker and various trial products downloaded from the internet, but I can't find a way to break down the individual files into a readable file format. I read your Labs test of media suites in *Shopper* May 2007 and it made me wonder if Roxio Easy Media Creator software would be the correct software to use?

Andy Geno

A Video DVDs use video compressed using the popular MPEG2 format, but it stores the footage in files with the extension .vob. This isn't as widely supported by editing software as the more common MPG extension. As you've discovered, Windows Movie Maker can't open .vob files, nor can it create DVD Video discs.

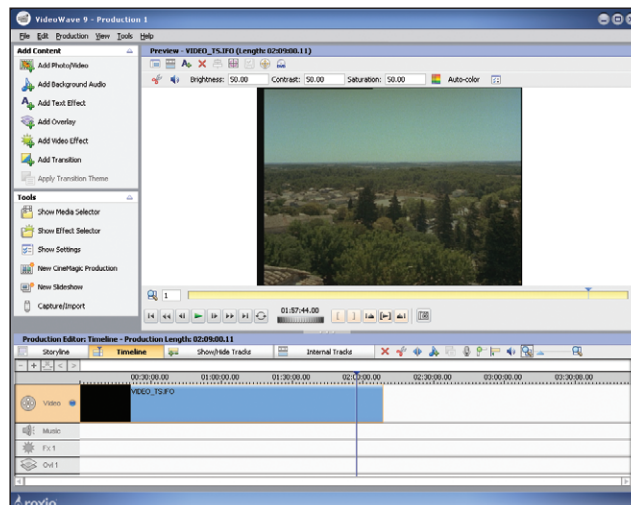
Roxio VideoWave, the video-editing application that's included in the Easy Media Creator Suite, is able to import VOB files, edit them and burn the results back to DVD Video disc. It's also able to reconstruct video clips that have been broken up into separate VOB files, which is common in DVDs with long

running times. The suite is an excellent all-rounder, but VideoWave is basic and a little awkward compared to dedicated software. If you're just interested in editing video and nothing else, we recommend Sony Vegas Movie Studio or Adobe Premiere Elements. Both cost around £50 including VAT, can import VOB files and are far more sophisticated than VideoWave. They use interfaces that look more complicated than VideoWave, but they're easier to use.

However, Vegas Movie Studio can't import Dolby Digital audio soundtracks, which are sometimes used on DVD Video discs. If you're

not sure which audio format your DVD recorder uses, you can download the trial version from www.sonymediasoftware.com to test its compatibility before you buy.

Whichever software you choose, make sure that you copy the VOB files to your hard disk using Windows Explorer before you attempt to import and edit them. Editing files directly from a DVD will be hopelessly slow. Sony Vegas Movie Studio includes a feature that automates this process, while converting the VOB files to MPG in the process. Click File, Import, DVD Camcorder Disc. **BP**



◀ Roxio VideoWave can edit VOB files, but its editing facilities are pretty basic